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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

Release on Receipt! (Do not release after July 5, 1941)

SUBJECT: "FORTNIGHTLY FOOD-SHOPPING TIPS." Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Consumers' Counsel, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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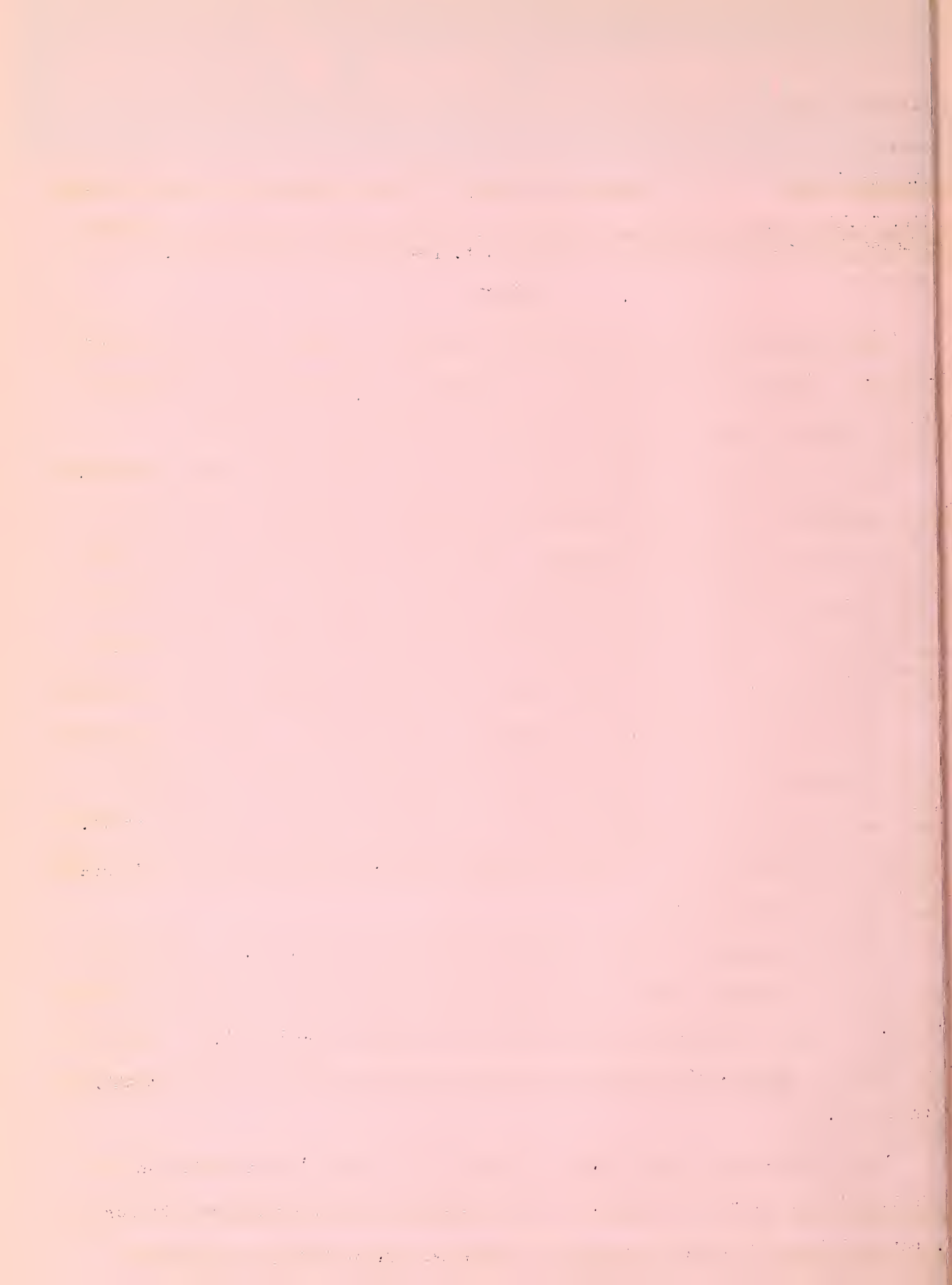
Once again here are tips for the lady who goes to market to buy the food for her family. Here are tips from the U. S. Department of Agriculture on supplies of food and prices to help you plan meals and take advantage of good buys.

As you might expect at this time of year, the first news is about vegetables. Fresh vegetables on the market just now aren't quite as plentiful as they were a year ago because of unfavorable weather. Not so many fresh tomatoes are for sale as last year, and not so many green peppers, onions, cucumbers, cabbages, string beans and beets as usual. However, you'll find plenty of carrots, peas, lettuce, celery and lima beans. Later in July more of the other vegetables will be coming in.

Now some news about spuds,--or potatoes, if you prefer. The dry weather has changed the potato picture. Instead of the big supplies of potatoes expected a short time ago, the next few weeks will see a relatively small crop going to market. Shipment of potatoes will be a third less than last year, and at close to record low levels for this time of year.

Another vegetable coming on the scene right now is green corn. The green corn season is underway. From now through August more and more corn will be coming to market. August is usually the peak month for tender corn-on-the-cob. From the news coming in right now, it looks as if more green corn will be on the market this year than last.

Now a little news about fruit. Probably the markets won't have quite as much fruit this summer as a year ago. Fewer oranges and sour cherries will be for sale, but probably more sweet cherries, apricots, grapes, lemons, peaches and



California plums. The pear crop this year will be about the same size as last year's.

More melons will be coming to market the next few weeks. But you won't find as many watermelons as last year. About the same number of cantaloups will be coming in.

Right now **stocks** of canned fruits and vegetables are low and will continue to be low until the new pack comes in. This doesn't mean the country has a shortage of canned goods. It means rather that wholesalers and retailers expecting higher prices have been laying in a large supply of canned goods.

So much for the news of vegetables and fruits. Now about dairy products. Butter, cheese and evaporated milk will continue to be much more expensive than last year. Prices have been going up during the past 3 months as a result of speculative buying and the purchases the Government has been making. So during the second half of the year prices of butter, cheese and evaporated milk probably won't go up as much as they usually do at that time. Unless weather conditions are unfavorable, the total supplies of dairy products both for use in this country and for export will be larger this year than last. But whether our markets will have more or less of these foods depends on how much the Department of Agriculture buys under its Food-for-Defense program. During April and May Government purchases absorbed only part of the extra milk produced.

So much for milk, butter and cheese news. Now about eggs. From the looks of things now, the hens of the United States are going to make a record this fall and winter. They'll lay more eggs this fall and winter than ever at that season. The larger number of pullets being raised this spring will begin to lay in the fall. But this summer, before the pullets start laying, egg production will be about the same as last year. Egg prices usually go up during the last half of the year.

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This year they may go up less than usual because prices are already high and so many eggs are on schedule for the fall. Nevertheless, eggs will sell for more all during 1941 than they did during 1940.

The last tips today are about meat. Here's news of beef, pork and lamb coming to your market.

First, about beef. Top grade beef--that is, beef graded choice or good, is now selling for wholesale prices only slightly above lower grade beef. Earlier this year there was a wide difference between the price of top-grade beef and lower-grade beef. It is quite usual for this difference to narrow down in May and June and widen during the last half of the summer. But this year more better-grade cattle will go to market during the next two months. So the markets will have larger supplies of better-grade beef in late summer and early fall.

Now about pork. Pork has been going up in price steadily since the middle of April, and it will probably go on up this summer. In fact, the price of pork may be the highest summer price since 1937. Not nearly so much pork on the market this summer as last---possibly from 10 to 20 percent less.

As for lamb, more lamb is coming to market right now and more will continue coming during July. Ordinarily, the price of lamb at the market goes down slightly from June to July, and then continues dropping for several months.

And that's all the tips on supplies and prices of food for today. More tips from the Department of Agriculture in a couple of weeks or so.

